

F: 7-1-1  
Bell's Chapel  
Mt. Ephraim Community  
Private

1874  
1925

This handsome one and a half story frame church is the replacement for the earlier log chapel that was constructed soon after purchase of the land in 1874. The log chapel was similar to those built in many black communities after emancipation. Behind the church is the cemetery, with well-kept grounds and inscribed gravestones of the founders of the community. As in other rural communities, the church and accompanying cemetery are recognized as the center of the community.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

F: 7-1-1  
Mag1 #

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

SEE FREDERICK COUNTY SITES SURVEY F-7-27 FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Bell's Chapel

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

West side of Mt. Ephraim Road

CITY, TOWN

Dickerson

☒ VICINITY OF Mt. Ephraim

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

6

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Frederick

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

☐ DISTRICT  
☒ BUILDING(S)  
☐ STRUCTURE  
☐ SITE  
☐ OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

☒ PUBLIC  
☐ PRIVATE  
☐ BOTH  
**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**  
☐ IN PROCESS  
☐ BEING CONSIDERED  
**No**

**STATUS**

☒ OCCUPIED  
☐ UNOCCUPIED  
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
☒ YES: RESTRICTED  
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED  
☐ NO

**PRESENT USE**

☐ AGRICULTURE ☐ MUSEUM  
☐ COMMERCIAL ☐ PARK  
☐ EDUCATIONAL ☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
☐ ENTERTAINMENT ☒ RELIGIOUS  
☐ GOVERNMENT ☐ SCIENTIFIC  
☐ INDUSTRIAL ☐ TRANSPORTATION  
☐ MILITARY ☐ OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Bell's Chapel, c/o Paul Wilson

Telephone #: 874-2629

STREET & NUMBER

Mt. Ephraim Road

CITY, TOWN

Dickerson

☐ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code  
Maryland 20753

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Frederick County Courthouse

Liber #: T 6

Folio #: 211

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Frederick

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**

F-7-1-1

**CONDITION**

☐ EXCELLENT  
☒ GOOD  
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED

**CHECK ONE**

☒ UNALTERED  
☐ ALTERED

**CHECK ONE**

☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

This handsome one and a half story frame church stands on the west side of Mt. Ephraim Road. The entrance of the church, which is located in the eastern gable end, is oriented towards the road, and behind the church is a small, well-kept cemetery. The church is surrounded by azaleas, dogwoods, and other shrubbery and small trees. The yard around the church is a wide grass lawn, which extends without fences down the slope to the cemetery. Further behind the church are the contemporary homes of the descendants of the founders of the community, Paul Wilson and Barbara Wilson.

The building itself consists of a three bay block, whose roof line is oriented east-west. The entranceway is sheltered by a small gable roof, enclosed porch. The frame is sheathed by weatherboards and rests on a foundation of mortared, coursed rubble. The tall windows contain four-over-four lights. The eaves are boxed with short returns in the gable ends. The roof is pierced near mid-length by a brick stove flue, and is covered with tin. At the front of the church, the roof is capped by a short bell tower, with a pyridimal roof.

The cemetery behind the church consists of a two dozen or more family plots, all of which are well maintained. The gravestones give the dates of birth and death of the principal members of the community in the late 19th century, and thereby constitute an important historical resource for the community.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		<b>Black history</b>	
				<b>Local History</b>	

SPECIFIC DATES 1874-19

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to the deed, TG 1/211, the land for this Methodist church was sold to the trustees of the church by E.G. Harris and Mary E. Harris in 1874. The price was fifty dollars. The trustees were William Taylor, Patrick Hebron, John H. Diggs, Henry Noldon, and John Beall.

Significantly, four of the five trustees are known to have lived in other communities. William Taylor, Patrick Hebron, and John H. Diggs lived in the Sugarland community and were listed as trustees of the Methodist church there, in the deed of purchase for the land in 1871 (deed EBP 9/74). Thus, there was an established connection among the black communities via Methodist churches. Henry Noldon, (or Nolden), lived in the Jonesville community. John Beall was one of the patriarchs of the Mt. Ephraim community.

The present structure was not however built in 1874. A log church was first constructed, and may be seen in the copy of the photograph of it is included with this survey. The original photograph is in the possession of Barbara Wilson in the Mt. Ephraim community. The present church was built in 1925.

The principal historical significance of this church and accompanying cemetery is that they have been the center of the Mt. Ephraim community for over a century. In fact, after construction of the log church it served as schoolhouse for the Black children of the Mt. Ephraim community until the construction of the Comstock school in the 1910s.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Deeds: TG 1/211. Frederick County Courthouse, Frederick, Maryland.

Oral interview, not taped, with Paul Wilson, Mt. Ephraim community, May 1979. By George McDaniel

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

George McDaniel, Historic Sites Surveyor Steve Doolittle/Tamar Hoewing

ORGANIZATION

Sugarloaf Regional Trails

DATE

5/79

STREET & NUMBER

Box 87

TELEPHONE

926-4510

CITY OR TOWN

Dickerson

STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: ~~Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438~~

SUGARLOAF REGIONAL TRAILS  
Box 87, Stronghold  
Dickerson, Md. 20753  
(301) 926-4510

W<sup>th</sup> Nicholson to the said Ephraim G. Harris about the year 1868 Beginning for the part herein conveyed at the end of 36  $\frac{3}{4}$  perches on the first line of said transfer and running thence with said first line correcting the same to the 3<sup>d</sup> day of September 1883 North 36 East 45  $\frac{3}{4}$  perches to a pile of stone then with the 2<sup>d</sup> line of said transfer correcting as before South 54  $\frac{3}{8}$  East 58  $\frac{3}{4}$  perches to a pile of stone then with the 3<sup>d</sup> line of said transfer correcting as before South 35  $\frac{5}{8}$  East 114  $\frac{1}{10}$  to the Beginning of a "Church Lot" and with it reversed and corrected as before North 54  $\frac{3}{8}$  West 12  $\frac{65}{100}$  per. South 35  $\frac{5}{8}$  West 12  $\frac{65}{100}$  per. South 54  $\frac{3}{8}$  East 12  $\frac{65}{100}$  per. to intersect the 3<sup>d</sup> line of said transfer at the end of 27  $\frac{25}{100}$  perches then with said 3<sup>d</sup> line correcting as before South 35  $\frac{5}{8}$  West 17 perches then by the Compass North 54  $\frac{3}{8}$  West 58  $\frac{3}{4}$  per. to the first mentioned place of beginning, Containing Twelve and three fourths of an acre more or less, as Witness our hands and seals

Test

Isaac Davis

E. G. Harris

Seal

Ida J. Harris

Seal

State of Maryland Frederick County, to wit:

I hereby certify that on this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of September in the year Eighteen hundred and Eighty three before the subscribed a Justice of the Peace of the State of Maryland in and for Frederick County, personally appeared Ephraim G. Harris and Ida J. Harris his wife and did each acknowledge the foregoing deed to be their respective act.

Isaac Davis J.P.

1883 December 19 A. M. Delivered to Jno. J. Nicholson for record kept filed in the Record of Deeds is Received for Record and Recorded October 26. 1883 at 11.40 O'clock A. M. Test Adolphus Seabate Jr. Clerk

This Deed made this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of September in the year Eighteen hundred and Eighty three by Ephraim G. Harris and Ida J. Harris his wife of Montgomery County and State of Maryland Witnesses that for and in consideration of two hundred and thirty dollars the said Ephraim G. Harris and Ida J. Harris his wife do grant in fee simple unto Ben Hallman of Frederick County and said State, all that Lot or parcel of ground situated in Frederick County, which is described as follows: the same being part of a tract of land called "Littleworth" and part of the same land which was conveyed by transfer from Jadoo Lawman to Basil Smith for twenty-five acres January 29<sup>th</sup> 1810 and from said Smith to other parties and lastly from Lloyd H. Nicholson to the said Ephraim G. Harris about the year 1868 Beginning for the part herein conveyed at a stone planted in the ground and marked R.E.H. on the south side of a small branch and running thence with the first line of said transfer correcting the same to September 3<sup>d</sup> 1883 North 36 East 36  $\frac{3}{4}$  perches then by the Compass South 54  $\frac{3}{8}$  East 58  $\frac{3}{4}$  perches to intersect the 3<sup>d</sup> line of said transfer at the end of 44  $\frac{3}{4}$  perches then with said third line correcting as before South 35  $\frac{5}{8}$  West 36  $\frac{3}{4}$  perches to a stone, then with the closing line of said transfer correcting as before North 54  $\frac{3}{8}$  West 58  $\frac{3}{4}$  perches to the beginning Containing Eleven acres and two rods and 7 perches of land more or less, and also the said Ephraim G. Harris and Ida J. Harris his wife do for the consideration hereinbefore mentioned grant unto the said Ben Hallman and his successors the right of way and the privilege of going to and of using water from a spring which is about thirty-five yards North of a point at the end of twenty-five perches on the second line of this deed, as witnesses

1883 November 20. Execut<sup>d</sup> & delivered  
At the Request of the African M.E. Church of Knoxville Tenn. Md.  
the following deed is received for Record and Recorded October 26. 1883  
at 10 O'clock A.M. Just - Adolphus Seasholtz, Jr. Clerk

This Deed made this 15<sup>th</sup> day of October in the year 1883, Witnesseth, whereas a deed was made by Isaac M. Merchant and Mary Merchant his wife to Charles Thonicks, Alfred Guyon, James Brooks, Rodney Edcemy and Shadous Brown, as trustees for the African Methodist Episcopal Church, of Knoxville Frederick County, Maryland, dated the 17<sup>th</sup> day of December in the year 1881 and recorded in Liber A.F. 505 folio 124 vs one of the Land Records of Frederick County and whereas since the making of said deed, the African Methodist Episcopal Church of Knoxville, Frederick County, Maryland, has been incorporated, and whereas said deed is not behind to convey a full legal title to the said African Methodist Episcopal Church of Knoxville, Frederick County, Maryland, therefore in consideration of the premises, and in further consideration of fifty dollars, we the said Isaac M. Merchant, Charles Thonicks, Alfred Guyon, James Brooks, Rodney Edcemy and Shadous Brown do grant unto the African Methodist Episcopal Church, of Knoxville Frederick County, Maryland in fee simple, all that piece of land lying near the town of Knoxville in Frederick County, Maryland, said piece of land embracing the whole of the two lots designated in the Map of Western as lots 18 & 19 in section 13 said lots lying north of the B & O R.R. and on the west side of the road leading from Knoxville to the Brick School House

Witness our hands and Seal

Test  
John Reid

Isaac M. Merchant (Seal)  
Charles Thonicks (Seal)  
Alfred Guyon (Seal)  
James Brooks (Seal)  
James W. Edcemy (Seal)  
Shadous Brown (Seal)

State of Maryland, Frederick County to wit:  
I hereby certify, that on this 15<sup>th</sup> day of October in the year 1883 before the subscriber a Justice of the Peace of the State of Maryland in and for Frederick County, personally appeared Isaac M. Merchant Charles Thonicks Alfred Guyon, James Brooks, Rodney Edcemy and Shadous Brown and did each acknowledge the foregoing deed to be their respective act:

John Reid J.P.

K

1883 December 19. Execut<sup>d</sup> & delivered to John H. Bell the following deed  
for order & receipt filed  
At the Request of John H. Bell the following deed  
is received for Record and Recorded October 26. 1883  
at 11<sup>th</sup> O'clock A.M. Just, Adolphus Seasholtz, Jr. Clerk

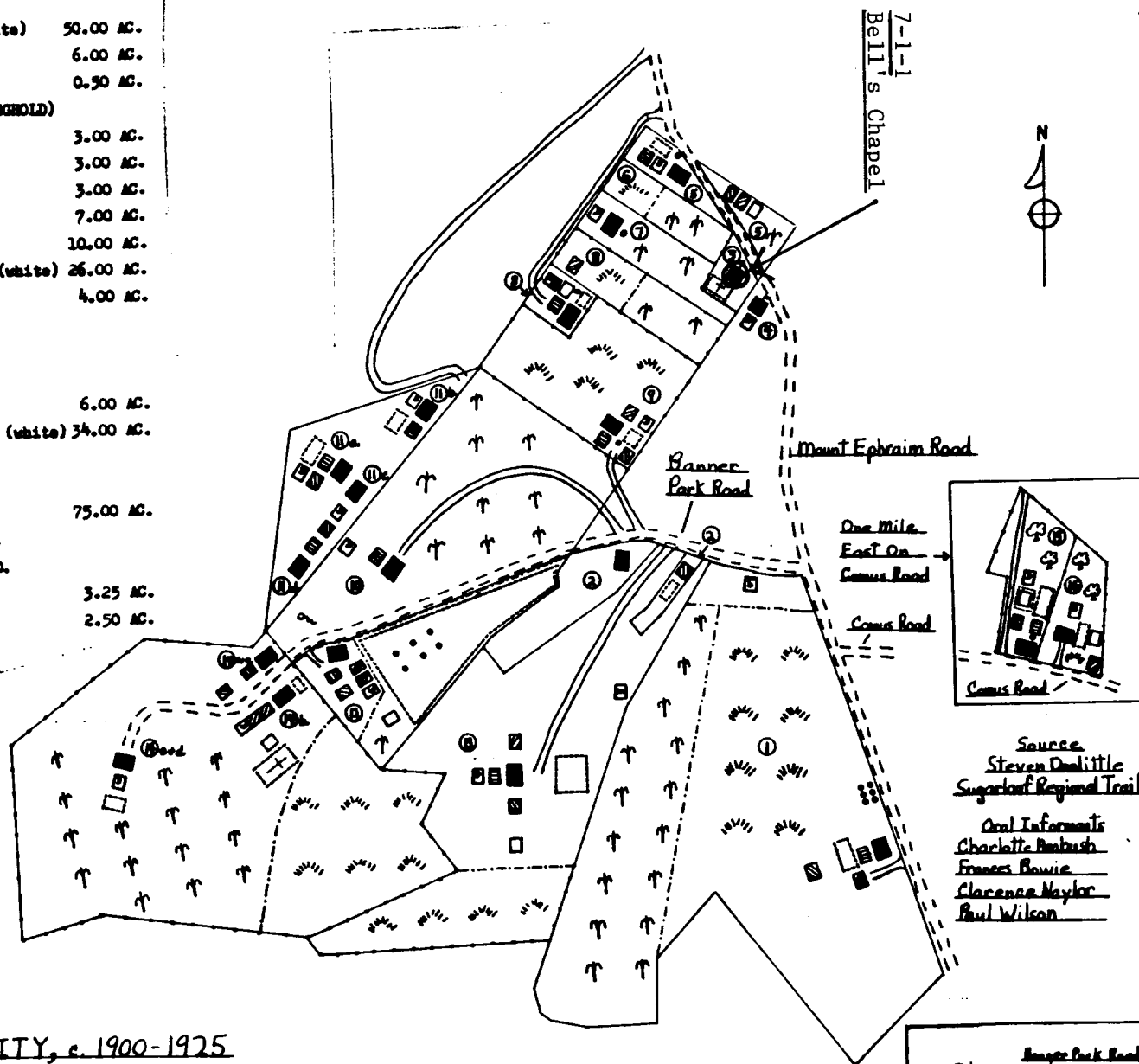
This Deed made this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of September in the year Eighteen hundred and Eighty three by Ephraim G. Harris and Ida J. Harris his wife of Montgomery County and State of Maryland, Witnesseth, that for and in consideration of two hundred and fifty five dollars the said Ephraim G. Harris and Ida J. Harris his wife do grant in fee simple unto John H. Bell of Frederick County and State of Maryland, all that lot or parcel of ground situated in Frederick County, which is described as follows the same being part of a tract of land called "Littlewood" and part of the same land which was conveyed by transfer from Zadoc Lammann to Basil Smith for twenty five acres January 27<sup>th</sup> 1810 and from said Smith to other parties and lastly from Lloyd

CHURCH	+
CEMETERY	+
LODGE	L
COMMUNITY CENTER	C
STORE	S
POST OFFICE	P
SCHOOL	S
DWELLING	■
PRIVY	□
STABLE	▨
MEAT HOUSE	▨
HEN HOUSE	▨
MILK HOUSE	▨
CORN/FEED HOUSE	▨
PIG PEN	▨
GARDEN	▨
PASTURE	~
CORNFIELD	↑
HAY FIELD	↑
ORCHARD	•
FOREST	•
THICKET	•
WELL	o
SPRING	o
STREAM	~
POND	•
PARCEL BOUNDARY	---
FENCED PARCEL Bdy.	---
FENCE	---
DIRT ROAD	---
LANE	---
PATH	...
STREAM FLOW	→

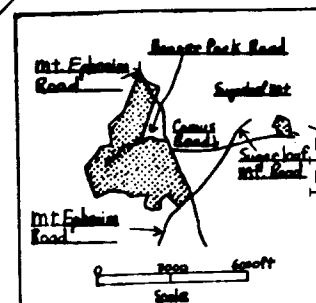
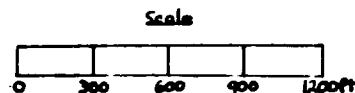
DWELLINGS AND OUTBUILDINGS NOT DRAWN TO SCALE  
HSTD. = HOMESTEAD PROP. = PROPERTY

## Key

1. WILL TURNER HSTD. (white) 50.00 AC.
2. FRED NICHOLS HSTD. 6.00 AC.
3. BELL'S CHAPEL 0.50 AC.
4. COMSTOCK SCHOOL (STRONGHOLD)
5. WILLIAM HALLMAN HSTD. 3.00 AC.
6. HANNAH HALLMAN HSTD. 3.00 AC.
7. JAMES HALLMAN HSTD. 3.00 AC.
8. EDNA HALLMAN HSTD. 7.00 AC.
9. MOSES HALLMAN HSTD. 10.00 AC.
10. CHARLIE HARRIS HSTD. (white) 26.00 AC.
- 11a. DAVID PROCTOR HSTD. 4.00 AC.
- b. RACHEL PROCTOR HSTD.
- c. LAURA PROCTOR HSTD.
- d. CHARLIE PROCTOR HSTD.
12. FRANK PROCTOR HSTD. 6.00 AC.
13. CLINTON NICHOLS HSTD. (white) 34.00 AC.
- 14a. MOODY FAMILY HSTD.
- b. MORRIS POSEY HSTD.
- c. WILLIAM PROCTOR HSTD. 75.00 AC.
- d. LINDWOOD PROCTOR HSTD.
- e. HARRISON RAWLINS HSTD.
15. ARTHUR WOOD HSTD. 3.25 AC.
16. ARTHUR NAYLOR HSTD. 2.50 AC.



MT EPHRAIM COMMUNITY, c. 1900-1925

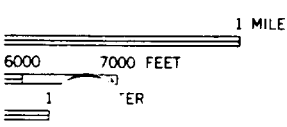
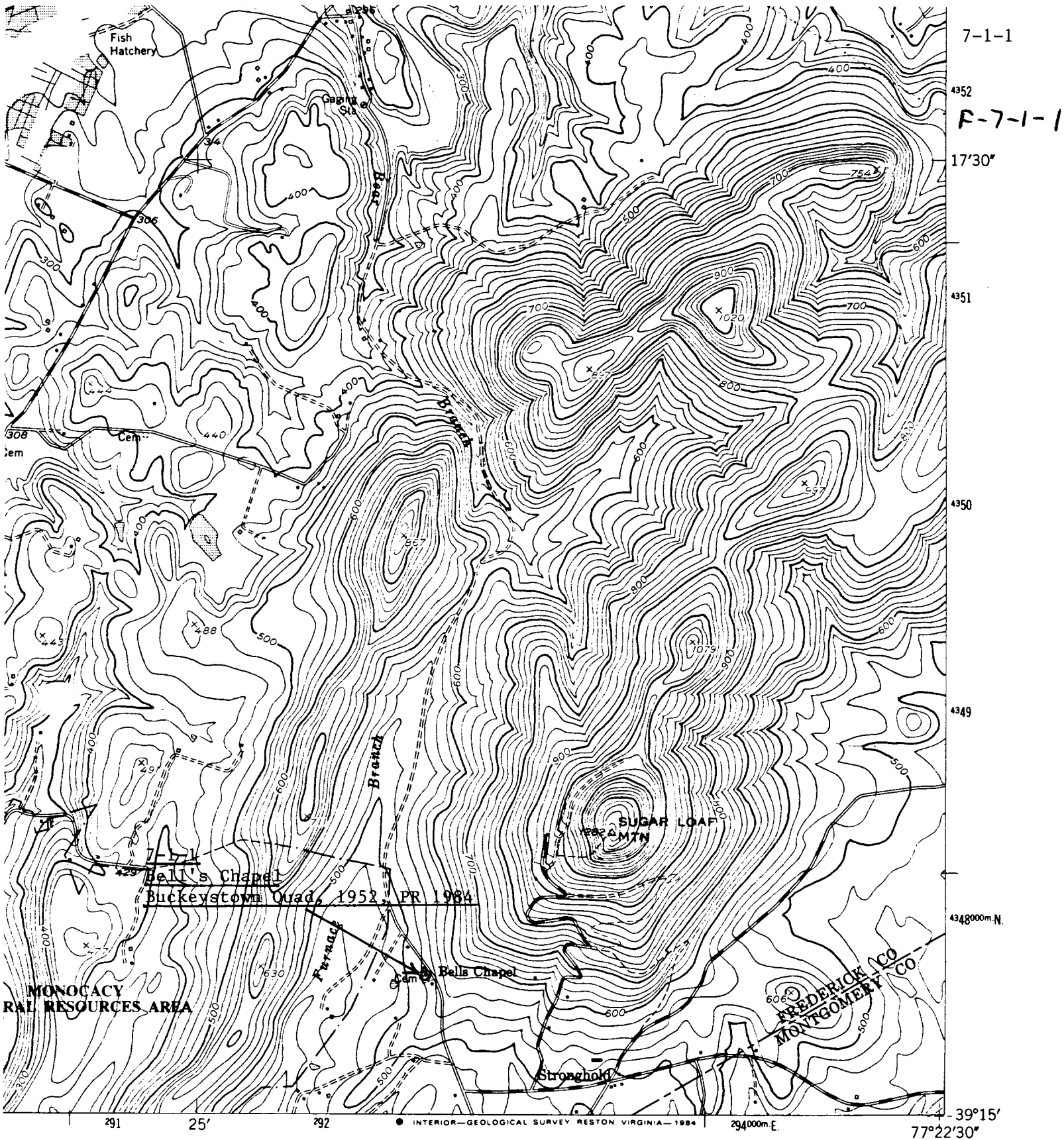


Source:  
Steven Doolittle  
Sugarloaf Regional Trails

Oral Informants:  
Charlotte Ambush  
Frances Bowles  
Clarence Naylor  
Paul Wilson

E-7-1-1





ARDS  
VIA 22092  
LE, VIRGINIA 22903  
RE REQUEST

QUADRANGLE LOCATION  
Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled by the Geological Survey in cooperation with Commonwealth of Virginia agencies from

ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———  
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———  
○ Interstate Route ○ U.S. Route ○ State Route

BUCKEYSTOWN, MD. - VA.  
39077-C4-TF-024

1952



Bill's Chapel

7-1-1

North Election

MT Johnson Community

plan by George McDaniel

1977

ADL 198002-2-14



Bell's Chapel

South Length

HA. F-7-1857

Mt. Ephraim Community

photo by George McManis

5/79

AO 190502.2 # 13



*Bells Chapel*

